

Dragons: Through the Lightning Traverse

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Summary: In this tale set in the Dragons series Hiccup and Astrid's relationship is pushed in a whole new direction. Hiccup has a chance to find out where Toothless came from...but at the price of losing his valued friend and love interest to his frenemy Snotlout. In the Lightning Traverse he will be tested, though, will he make it in time to stop Astrid and confess how he truly feels? R&R.

1. Chapter 1 Invitation

Dragons

Through the Lightning Traverse

****Authors note: ****This is my very first entry into the How to Train Your Dragon series. In it Hiccup and Toothless will be tested on their friendship and ability to weather through the most difficult scenario they ever have faced. However on the other side Snotlout and Astrid will spend some alone time together. Hiccup will be torn in two in this story and the adventure will push this young Dragon Rider/Trainer to his absolute breaking point. Hang on tight, cause this Nightfury won't slow down for no one, away we go.

CH.1: Invitation

Astrid stared over at Hiccup watching him teach. He was a natural at what he did, hands down no one could do what he did. She usually found her rapt attention fixated on the way his smile lit up his face or the way his excitement overtook his entire being. She had been working the nerve for a week now to invite him on a walk, just the two of them. However a new dragon usually popped up so she had to quell her desire. Now as he was finishing up she knew this was her moment, backing down was not an option.

"Alright, you all have your assignments. Alvin could strike any day so best make sure you're prepared, dismissed." Hiccup walked over to

Toothless and patted his head. "Hey bud, ready for a fly?"

"Hiccupâ€¦could I speak to you?" Astrid rubbed her arm walking over; her eyes downcast as she fought the made blush pushing over her Viking features. While she was considered beautiful, she was a little self-conscious ever since Hiccup fell for Heather.

"Wellâ€¦could it wait Astrid? I promised Toothless I would take him flying today. He seems to not have much to do while I teach-."

"It'll just take a secondâ€¦I'm sure Toothless will understand." She forcefully grabbed his arm pulling him off to the side.

"Ok Astrid, I'm all yoursâ€¦wellâ€¦for the moment that is." Hiccup blushed and looked away.

Even she was blushing at that, however since she was making all the moves she was certain once Toothless groaned he would forget it ever happened. "Hiccupâ€¦you and I haven't really hung out that muchâ€¦aloneâ€¦togetherâ€¦"

"Sure we haveâ€¦what about all the flights we've been on with Stormfly and Toothless? There was even that one time you and I were tracking down that wild dragon-."

"Hiccupâ€¦what I'm trying to say isâ€¦" Astrid suddenly realized Snotlout was walking over. Great, she thought, I bet he is going to hit on me again.

"Hello Astrid, Hiccupâ€¦would you mind giving us a momentâ€¦alone?" Snotlout smiled briefly before turning his attention to Astrid.

"Don't mind meâ€¦not like I was actually conversing here or anything. Maybe you could tell me later Astrid." Hiccup wore a sad smile and began walking off.

"That is what you always say," Astrid heaved a sad sigh and then looked over at Snotlout. "Ok, make it fast; you know how standing this close to you makes me break out."

"Oh trust meâ€¦this won't take long at all. Turns out my dad is going to be in the Great Hall all day, which meansâ€¦I'm home alone-."

"Greatâ€¦maybe you can work on shadow puppets with Hookfang." She rolled her eyes but saw he was actually getting nervous.

"The thing isâ€¦much as Hookfang and I have a blast hanging togetherâ€¦I was kinda hoping you'd come over."

Astrid felt her eyes widen and looking over she saw Hiccup stop in his tracks. Panic set in and she tried to think of a reason, any for which to turn him down. Her eyes pleaded at Hiccup for help, even an excuse would be acceptable. Stillâ€¦what she saw in his eyes was breaking her heart, he was actually debating, torn between his dragon and her. She just wanted to run awayâ€¦but she also realized a girl could only be ignored for so long before she gave in.

"Wow Snotlout, you mean it?" Her voice was loud, hoping that Hiccup would become a man she could count on, much like how Toothless could depend on him as a friend. However once again Hiccup was unresponsive as he climbed on top Toothless; his face lowered.

"Yeahâ€¦soâ€¦what do you say?" Snotlout looked at her eagerly.

Darn it Hiccup, she thought, what will it take to get you to go out with me? The thought of doing the punch on the arm followed by the kiss crossed her mind, but she shuddered it away soon as it came. It was her sign of affection to Hiccupâ€¦but he never took it upon himself to return the affection, take the lead.

"I am inâ€¦apparently I have no other plans at all. Nope, none at all; wasn't even planning on taking a romantic walkâ€¦at all."

"That's greatâ€¦see that Hiccupâ€¦that is how it is done. I'll see about getting us some food, what do girls eat?" Snotlout thought it over as he walked out.

"Aren't you going to say anything?" Astrid implored. "I am going to Snotlout's houseâ€¦just him and meâ€¦what is with you?"

"I'm sorry, just, kinda distracted. Plus, aren't you the one who usually punches him by now or makes it clear you would not ever go to his houseâ€¦by yourself?" Hiccup looked at her and try as he might yes it did bother himâ€¦butâ€¦he still found himself shy around her, even after all they had been through. Plus running the Academy and keeping the island safe from Alvin and his deplorable Outcasts drained him at times. He wanted to give Astrid what she wanted, take the initiative, butâ€¦here they were with her actually moving onâ€¦without him.

"I was waiting for you to make a move Hiccup! How long are you planning to keep me waiting? Snotlout at least shows initiative, shows me he likes me, what do you do? You are so wrapped up in this Academy and training dragonsâ€¦you clearly forget you are still human. "

"Astrid in case you have forgottenâ€¦Alvin has dragons now. We can't just move on with our life like that hasn't happened. Berk needs us, and sorry if I don't throw myself at youâ€¦I just have more important things to do right now."

Astrid felt her face tear up at his words. "Soâ€¦that is how you feel huh? Then don't let me take you away from whatever has you distracted, I will go home and prepare for my date with Snotlout. Consider yourself off the hook Hiccup, whatever we hadâ€¦it's gone."

"Astridâ€¦waitâ€¦" Hiccup reached out but saw it was too late, she was already flying off on Stormfly and he felt his entire being shake. What had he just done?

Toothless watched them disappear and looked up at his friend in concern. He was all ready to fly after them, but the hands on the reins said otherwise.

"It is ok budâ€|she just needs to be alone right now." Hiccup was about to leave when he saw Gobber walk in.

"Something the matter Hiccup? I just saw Astrid flying away and she seemed distraught, something happen between you two?' Gobber walked over to the board of Dragons looking over the lesson.

"Gobberâ€|I might have messed things up with Astrid. I made a complete jerk of myselfâ€|now she wants nothing to do with me." He sighed running his hand over his face.

"I see, well, did you know your father made a yak of himself with your mother?" He smiled remembering it well. "In fact, they nearly didn't get married at all."

"Waitâ€|how come I haven't heard this?' Hiccup looked over at him.

"Oh that is because it is not Stoic's proudest moment. He ran his mouth off a little too much and she actually ended up spending the night with his best friend." Gobber looked over his shoulder as Hiccup pondered this.

"No, waitâ€|are you saying it was you?' Hiccup couldn't tell how he felt hearing this. While yes it did happen in the past, if circumstances had carried on Gobber would've been his dad.

"Yep, and you know what, I respected my friendship too much with Stoic to do anything. She cried on my shoulder and I steered her right back at the lug. Astrid right now needs someone to be there for her, whether or not Snotlout is that guyâ€|remains to be seen. You still got a chanceâ€|though that isn't why I came here."

"Then why did you?" Hiccup felt his hopes dashed realizing that if he let Astrid go to Snotloutâ€|wellâ€|he kinda didn't want to picture it.

"I found a map that might interest you. Turns out it might have something to do with Toothless. While sure you might've been misled the first time, this seems certain to be the genuine article. Here take a look." He reached into his pants and pulled it out.

Hiccup accepted it and looked at it closely. "The Lightning Traverseâ€|I've heard that beforeâ€|"

`"Your father told you this when you were about my knee's length. The Lightning Traverse is a place far away from Berk that lightning strikes all the time. Thor himself was said to first get struck by lightning in that very valley. It is also an island where the Nightfury was first rumored to be. Should be worth looking into."

"This is greatâ€|butâ€|what about Astrid?" He looked off where she had left.

"I will leave the map in your capable hands, what you do with it is up to you. I would suggest you hurry though, if your father finds out you intend to go thereâ€|he'll flip. Astrid will still be here when you get back, though, whether or not it is with Snotlout or not remains to question. I thought she would've turned him

downâ€| "

"Yeahâ€|so did I." Hiccup looked at the map, decided on it and realized he had to go. Urging Toothless up he flew out of the Academy, his eyes looking to Astrid before leaving.

2. Chapter 2 Snotlout and Astrid

CH.2: Snotlout and Astrid

Snotlout had headed home and found his dad rummaging through the weapons. "Son, do you know where my battle axe is? I could've sworn I left it here with the other fine weapons-."

"Can't help right now dadâ€|got myself a lady friend coming over later." Snotlout was moving to his room but was stopped by his father.

"What is this about a lady friend now?" His father gave him a curious glance. This was not like his son; he normally never had anyone over, not even that son of Stoic.

"Oh it's Astrid; she has been crazy about me for a while now. It took her a long time, actually longer than I thought, but she finally agreed to go on a date with me. Yeah you heard it; your son has a date."

"Wasn't she into that Hiccup kid though?" His father asked moving to the wall and examining one of the axes.

"Wellâ€|it wasn't like they were permanent, all she does is hit him and kiss him. The guy looks like a fish kissing; he will hold no candle to me." He wished his father would take a little more interest instead of looking for some stupid axe.

"Yes, well, best of luck to you on that son. Ahhâ€|there it is. Come here my beauty, we shall show Stoic who has the most might. Best find a meal for yourselfâ€|I intend to come home late." He headed out then.

"Nice talk dad," Snotlout waved at him just as the door slammed. "Who needs advice, I got all I need right here." It kind of felt lonely so he headed outside to see Hookfang.

Hookfang was lying in the grass snoring heavily. He was a little exhausted from the training today and saw it fit to rest; he rightly deserved it after all. Hearing footsteps though he let out a yawn and through sleep crusted eyes he saw Snotlout.

"There is my shining star. Look, tonight Astrid will be over, so feel free to go elsewhereâ€|I don't want you bursting into flames running the moment." He hoped he would understand.

Hookfang gave him an indifferent look before settling down and sleeping again. He found Astrid acceptable, far as the Vikings went, but after all the hurt she put his rider in, well, he didn't see much happening.

"Heyâ€|did you hear me?" Snotlout wanted it known, heard clearly,

instead of giving the cold shoulder where something was going to happen.

Hookfang heaved a sigh and opening his mouth he closed his mouth over Snotlout and lifting his head he shook his about.

"Message read loud and clearâ€|can you put me down now?' Snotlout felt gravity take over and he was lying on his back in a puddle of dragon saliva.

"Hey Snotlout, Hookfang, what are you two up to?' Fishlegs inquired. He was standing there holding the book of dragons and his dragon Meatlug was nearby eating rocks.

"Well, not that it matters any, but Astrid and I are going to be on a dateâ€|in my houseâ€|alone." He made sure he said it slow enough for him to understand.

"Is Hiccup ok with this? Cause last I checked he was really into Astrid." Fishlegs looked around expecting to see Hiccup.

"Turns out he doesn't care much as you think he does. Hardly said a word at allâ€|and Astrid seemed really into the idea, she spoke loudly and seemed quite enthused."

"Are you sure you weren't hearing her incredulousness at the very concept of-?" He backed away seeing the stare of pain and hurt, the look he had grown used to hanging with him.

"No, I meanâ€|I don't think so, stop confusing me. Look, for the first time Astrid and I will be alone together; maybe she can finally see I'm better than Hiccup and his dragon skills. It takes more than flying a dragon to make ya a man."

"Do you know where Hiccup is though?" Fishlegs wanted to see if Hiccup was really ok with this. Sure he didn't speak openly about he felt about many things, still, he knew this was wrong.

"I don't knowâ€|and I don't care. Now if you'll excuse meâ€|I need to take a bath to get this dragon saliva out of my hair. Unlessâ€|do you know if Astrid likes guys in dragon saliva?" Snotlout got up and leaned in close.

Fishlegs covered his nose and nodded his head. "Oh yesâ€|definitely. In fact, how about allowing Meatlug to lick you up, the wetter the betterâ€|so it says in the book of dragons."

"Isn't that book about dragons? I mean, what does that say in there about guys and girls dating?' Snotlout leaned in took but suddenly found Meatlug before him and her tongue brushing against him.

"Ohâ€|it says plenty. I should probably go nowâ€|dinner is being prepared even as we speak. If you see Hiccup send him my way." Fishlegs hurried off with Meatlug.

"Yeah yeahâ€|whatever, now I just need to procure some food." Going inside he fetched his weapon and sought out some grub. Preparing the food took some time and by the time Astrid showed he was wiping at his brow over the cooked meat.

* * *

><p>Astrid heaved a sigh at her predicament. Making her way to Snotlout's house she looked for any possible avenue of escape, none came. The day was still early yet and evening was fast approaching, if she had to kiss Snotlout she would kill Hiccup. Approaching the steps she decided to give a call, if no answer came she would leave, at least then she gave it a try.<p>

"Is anyone home? No, well I'll come back another day thenâ€|" Astrid turned to leave but found Snotlout standing in the threshold and his hand was outstretched reaching for her.

"Going so soon? C'mon Astrid, the food is all prepared and the night is young." He leaned in for a kiss but felt her hand over his mouth.

"Yeahâ€|don't push it." Astrid moved inside finding the fireplace lit and on the table were two plates fixed with some freshly cut meat. She admitted the food smelled great; however she still wished it was Hiccup instead of Snotlout.

"I hope you enjoy itâ€|I hunted it myself. It is just us, you and me, alone. I have the evening planned out with some fine dining and snuggling next to the fire place. Maybe even someâ€|kissing is involved as well-."

"Don't make me lose my appetite," she told him taking a seat, her glare sending him over to his side. Eating in silence she thought over Hiccup's actions. It was so unlike him, rash and completely out of control, like all the attempts that Alvin had done set him on edge. She worried about him, but, what were the chances that he would actually change?

"So Astridâ€|how is the meat?' Snotlout asked as he dug into his. Using his bare hands he tore it up and chomped on it swallowing it with the cup of water he had.

Astrid took a few bitesâ€|not bad. The meat was kind of raw but also cooked well enough where the flavor stayed on her tongue. Hiccup probably couldn't even cook, which kind of dampened her romantic hopes of them in the future. "It isn't half bad Snotlout, I'll give you this much, you know how to prepare Yak."

"Thanks, my dad made me learnâ€|says that a man needs to know how to cook for his woman, that if a man was too frail and scared of cooking meat, he would be better off married to a sheep."

Astrid laughed at that and pictured Mildew. The only companion he had was a sheep, though these days he was hanging out with Alvin and his lot. Finishing her food she stood up and felt she needed an escape, an excuse to cut this 'date' short. Right now he wasn't disgusting, in fact, he was kind and attentiveâ€|and that scared her.

"So, thank you for this fine mealâ€|but I really should be goingâ€|" Astrid was about to leave but Snotlout was over by the door.

"No, you can't leaveâ€|not yet. Please join me by the fireâ€|then you can go." He was coming close to begging, which he was told by his

father was not a Viking way of doing things.

"Fineâ€|but keep your distance." Astrid resigned herself to her fate as she took a seat by him, the fire crackling creating the perfect romantic atmosphere. She could feel her defenses shutting down and the way he lookedâ€|it was driving her crazy. Could she be actually falling for him? "Hiccupâ€|where are you?" She said softly.

****Authors note: ****Astrid is in a fine pickle as she is alone with Snotlout and might be falling for him. However her hope has yet to be dashed that Hiccup will come to her rescue. Meanwhile in the next chapter Hiccup and Toothless will find themselves on an adventure fraught with peril and revelations. See ya then.

3. Unholy offspring of lightning and death

CH.3: Unholy offspring of lightning and death

Toothless soared through the sky, his wings spread out catching the air currents as he stayed afloat. The feeling was insatiable, his nostrils open catching the fresh smells all over. Atop him seated in his saddle his best friend remained pensive, caught up in his thoughts. He let out a sound letting him know he was worried.

"You don't have anything to worry about budâ€|the Lightning Traverse is probably just overhyped story drama to keep people away. There is probably only like one lightning repeated." He said patting his head.

Toothless of course wasn't concerned about the lightning so much as Hiccup's romantic life. He had liked Astrid since he had first met him, and for a bit he was jealous; however he grew to realize that Hiccup and Astrid were meant for each other. Flying off on yet another adventure he didn't want Hiccup to lose what he valued most of all.

"Ok, looking at this map the Lightning Traverse should be dead ahead. Huhâ€|doesn't look like much nowâ€|" Hiccup lowered the map and frowned.

That is when the sky darkened and the wind howled. The water began to surge about below them and the feeling of dread crawled down his back. Hiccup adjusted his leg in the stirrup and led Toothless to the right.

"I got a bad feeling about this budâ€|maybe we should turn backâ€|" Hiccup was about to; in fact he had every intention toâ€|until the first lightning came down. Barely dodging it he adjusted the flight trajectoryâ€|only to see lightning flash before his very eyes.

Toothless let out a panicked cry before diving low to the water. Lightning continued to play around them causing fish to float up on the water and electric eels to swim about in glee. Pulling up he went to the left, then to the rightâ€|the lightning crashing all around them with the booming thunder.

"This is badâ€|this is really bad. Oh what was wrong with meâ€|I

should've asked Astrid out. Waitâ€|she was asking me outâ€|is that even right?' Hiccup spun Toothless as a rock nearby exploded into tiny bits, one knocking him on the head. "Toothlessâ€|we need to find shelter bud, don't think we can last if we fall to the ocean below."

Toothless concurred, but there wasn't a lot of land for which to seek shelter. Even now he was being worked hard; each method executed only brought them a second of breath before the next attack. Climbing high he twisted his body angling for a break through the clouds. It seemed to work, for a bit, but the thunder was so loud that Hiccup lost balance and fell.

"Toothless!" Hiccup began to fall and lightning slashed along his arm. He let out a loud cry and held his arm as he spun out of control. Below him the water beckoned and darkness began to close in around him.

Toothless dove faster than he ever had before. His wings were folded in making him light as a feather but enough weight to fall without floating. At the last second he was under his rider and friend catching him on his back.

"Way to goâ€|budâ€|knew you couldâ€|do itâ€|" Hiccup wore a weak smile and soon blacked out.

Toothless let out a whine but got no response. Lifting up he felt his tail engulfed in flame from the lightning. His dive had been steep and he was just over the water. The eels were causing him to panic; not knowing how he'd handle it if he fell in. The lightning drew about him readying to finish him off. At the last second he veered hard right and with a spin he drew his wings up in hope of protecting Hiccup.

Crashing down he tumbled for a bit, pain shooting through his body and all around him the lightning seethed in anger. Looking over he saw Hiccup was lying across from himâ€|his body unmoving and his shirt was torn. Reaching out he felt darkness close in around him and then he was out.

* * *

><p>Hiccup stood in the darkness, lost and confused. "Helloâ€|is anyone there?' His voice came off as an echo and no matter where he walked darkness was sure to follow.<p>

"Hiccup!" A voice rang out. It was strong and commanding, no fear in it at all.

"Momâ€|is that you?' Hiccup raced frantically in search of a body that belonged to the voice. However he could not find one, his urgency grew until he was clawing at the darkness around him.

"Do not fear the darknessâ€|embrace itâ€|reach for your dragon." The voice said again. "Your dragon can see you in the darknessâ€|you two are oneâ€|he needs you now more than ever. Believe in each otherâ€|"

"Momâ€|why can't I see you?' Hiccup looked around and suddenly he saw Toothless. "Toothlessâ€|you're ok, how you doing bud?"

Toothless was overjoyed to see Hiccup and raced over pushing him over. Licking his face he sat down on his haunches and smiled.

"It is good to see you too. You wouldn't believe itâ€¦but I heard my mom. I could've sworn it was her voiceâ€¦butâ€¦I kinda don't want it to be, you know. Dad and I lost her so long agoâ€¦wouldn't it be funny if she was stillâ€¦"

Toothless tilted his head to the side and growled lightly. It wasn't mean or anything, but, staying in this darkness wasn't good.

"Your rightâ€¦time to focus. Okâ€¦lead us out of here Toothless." Hiccup climbed onto his back and as Toothless let out a roar they began racing out of there. The darkness followed behind but the light prevailed showing them a way out. "I see itâ€¦we're almost there."

As the light parted around them they both woke up staring at each other. Toothless recovered first and managed his footing and looking around. They were on a small island, not much keeping them from getting wet. His tail was in bad shape so flight was out of the question. The lightning continued crashing around them but they were safeâ€¦for the time being.

"Where are we?' Hiccup walked along seeing a few trees and some rocks piled on top of each other. It was only then he recognized it. "Toothlessâ€¦do you know what these are?"

Toothless drew closer and sniffed at the rocks. In fact, this island bore smells similar to ones he held on himself.

"These are graves bud, judging by how the island has agedâ€¦I'd say these are old. This could be just as the map said. Which would meanâ€¦these graves belong to Nightfury. But they are man-madeâ€¦soâ€¦who was here to actually see them? Is their grave around here as well?"

Toothless sat there trying to process this. He had been led to believe there were other Nightfury like himâ€¦only to have his hopes dashed. Then he came to accept the fact that he was the sole survivor of his species, which he came to understand as not being an entirely bad thing. Now though it appeared these rocks signified that he at one point did have parentsâ€¦but that didn't change the fact he was still alone, the last of his kind. While the other dragons had offspring to carry their bloodlineâ€¦when he wentâ€¦that was it.

"I know this is bumming you out bud, and I wish I could make the pain go away. I mean, if I found out my mom was aliveâ€¦not sure I'd believe it. And I bet you are thinking that you wished you were never taken hereâ€¦and I am really sorry about this. Soâ€¦how about we pay our respects then get out of here."

Toothless nodded his head. And for the next half hour or so they just sat there in silence, the lightning even holding off, weird coincidence. It was on this island that lightning and death met and it was here that Toothless was born. The identity of whoever buried the dragons was long gone, likely lost to never tell how it came to be, that a sole Viking saw two Nightfury under one sky in flight or together.

"Okâ€¦time to flyyyyyyâ€¦" Hiccup just realized then their predicament. "This is not goodâ€¦I don't have the materials to make you a new tailâ€¦" Hiccup began to panic as he raced around the small island; his foot that Gobber had made him neared the water and lightning cracked before him setting him down on his butt.

Toothless roared at the lightning and dragged his friend back. Looking back at his tail he wished he could fly like normal dragonsâ€¦at least then they wouldn't be stuck.

"This isn't your fault budâ€¦I didn't come prepared. Lightningâ€¦it doesn't like anyone does it? I failed her Toothless, Astrid, I-I should've said somethingâ€¦stopped her from going to Snotlout's house. I was so focused, so caught up in training dragons and defending Berkâ€¦I never once stopped to think about her at all."

Toothless licked him and sat there watching as the lightning danced in the sky before crashing down into the water. He found it a bit odd the lightning didn't come onto the island itself, though he didn't think too much on it as he was there for his friend.

"I've failed at so many things in life Toothlessâ€¦why couldn't I get this one thing right?" Hiccup bowed his head onto his knees as he curled up and cried. He hadn't remembered crying that much in his life, not since the day that his father told him about his mom. Still his body was wracked with guilt and as the rain poured down over him and Toothless he just wished he was back in Berkâ€¦with the girl he loved.

****Authors note: ****Seems things are looking bleak for Toothless and Hiccup. While they did find out where Toothless had been born and the identity of the graves, they still have no way of leaving. In the next chapter we return to Berk and see what Astrid and Snotlout are up to.

4. Chapter 4 Astrid's confession

CH.4: Astrid's confession

"So Astrid, the mood is right, the lighting is justâ€¦right, don't you think its time we make this official?" Snotlout smiled.

Astrid wore a weak smile as she felt her nerves go flip flop all over the place. The nearer he drew the more her heart raced. Try as she might a part of her leaned forward, her eyes drawing close as she yearned for the feel of lips on hers. Wait what?

"Umâ€¦is it hot in here? I think I need toâ€¦get some fresh air." Astrid rose up quickly and ran her hand through her hair.

"Umâ€¦okâ€¦but don't be long. I'll be here waiting for you." He wore a narrowed look and went to place his hand down but slipped and fell on his face. "Ouch."

Astrid hurried out the door and walked for a bit before yelling. "Ahhhhhh!" She screamed till her lungs ached and she fell to the

ground. "I'm such an idiotâ€¦I came that close to kissing him! I've known Snotlout most of my life, and while a part of me believes he will change, another part realizes he will still be the same jerk he always is."

"Hey what's with the screaming?" Tuffnut walked over and rubbed at his eyes.

"Yeah can't you see we're trying to do something inconspicuous," Ruffnut noted as she put the sheep she was carrying down.

"I don't even want to know," Astrid said, her arms folded.

"Wellâ€¦we weren't going to tell you anyway," Tuffnut said. "By the wayâ€¦what are you doing at Snotlout's place?"

"Nothingâ€¦justâ€¦on my way home," Astrid lowered her arms and tried to act nonchalant.

"I seeâ€¦no wait I don't. Something is fishy here." Tuffnut found this rather suspicious. She after all hated Snotlout, or didn't really like him that well compared to Hiccup.

"She is on a date," Ruffnut pointed out, "I can read it on her body signals."

"It is body language, and no, we're just hanging outâ€¦" Astrid didn't really feel good about this, and the way Ruffnut said thatâ€¦kind of made her ashamed like she were cheating, but she isn't cause Hiccup and her weren't even dating.

"No I am most certain it is body signals, the way impulses and nerves go through the body sending signals to the brain. Of courseâ€¦that is how I saw it in my dream."

Astrid rolled her eyes as this was getting her nowhere. The twins were normally loose cannons; causing destruction and pranks where they saw fit. Talking to them made her want to butt her head into the wall. "Anywayâ€¦shouldn't you two be going back toâ€¦whatever it was you were doing."

"Oh rightâ€¦hehâ€¦your going to love this. We got this sheep and we're going to put it on Barf and Belch's head, when a Viking comes out of their house they will see it above the roof, they will think the sheep flied up there."

"And this accomplishes what?" Astrid asked.

"Well duhâ€¦Vikings don't like morning. It is during the night when they are most active. C'mon Ruffnutâ€¦I know just the house to prank." Tuffnut picked up the sheep and walked off.

"In a second. Look Astrid, Snotlout may not be the ideal choice for a boyfriend stillâ€¦at least he is there for ya. I'm just sayingâ€¦far as guys on the island goes, only two have ever shown interest in you, and you didn't even start interacting with Hiccup till he started standing out training dragons. Your choice, just saying it as it is."

"Thanksâ€¦I'll keep that in mind." Astrid sighed and watched as Ruffnut ran off. Speaking to them hadn't really cleared her mind, not that she thought it would, still it was better company then Snotlout right now. If she went back in thereâ€¦she'd have to face the music.

Still in the end she trudged up the steps and as she entered she found Snotlout standing there holding flowers. His face looked flushed and he was nearly out of breath. She tilted her head to the side not sure what to make of this.

"Astridâ€¦your backâ€¦not that I was worried or anything, cause I wasn't. I picked these out for youâ€¦they were close byâ€¦so here." He shoved them at her.

Astrid moved closer and took the flowers. "Wow Snotloutâ€¦you shouldn't haveâ€¦" She didn't know where to put them and as she set them down she saw him close the distance. They were just a breath away and she suddenly grew wary of the inches their lips separated presented.

"I know, went way overboard, still you are worth it Astrid. I know I come off as a jerk, can't fix that, what I can though is I will be there for you. If Stormfly gets injured and has to be put downâ€¦I will be there for you. If your parents grow ill and you need a shoulder to cry onâ€¦I'll be there for you."

"Yeah, that is very touchingâ€¦really should've stopped though at the jerk bit." Astrid saw him reach for her hands and she didn't have time to put them down before they were together. Ok, this was not awkward at all.

"Astrid, tell me this feels right, cause the way my heart is racingâ€¦it has to. Hiccup will always place the dragon's needs before you, even his father has taken a liking to his dragonâ€¦I mean have you seen how much of his chiefly duties are done from the sky now? I am a manâ€¦and while yes I do ride Hookfang, he isn't my first priority in lifeâ€¦you are. Heck I liked you long before we friended dragons. We were meant for each other, you and me, I mean Iâ€¦soâ€¦don't freak when I do thisâ€¦"

Astrid felt her eyes widen knowing what was coming. Every inch of her was screaming to run and yet a part of her told her to stay put and see where this went. All she could hear was her heart and as he drew in for a kiss she reached for a dagger and held it at his throat. Her eyes flashed and her breath was in a near hiss. "My heart belongs to Hiccup! So, you might want to open your eyesâ€¦now."

Snotlout kept them closed, opening them just made his reality shatter. "Can't I just pretend we're kissingâ€¦cause honestlyâ€¦my mother's dagger at my throat, not romantic at all."

"Your mother has good taste. Look Snotlout, I am sorry I let this get this far. I was hoping Hiccup would burst in here all romantic likeâ€¦butâ€¦he isn't a romantic. Much as a part of me wants to be with a guy professing his feelings out in the openâ€¦I love Hiccup too much to do this. No hard feelings ok."

"No, I mean, yeah hard feelings. I really love you Astridâ€¦I'm the ultimate Viking, Hiccup is weak and like you said doesn't hold a

candle in the romance department. What makes you think he will change when he comes back? You're better off with meâ€¦so put the dagger down and kiss me."

Astrid thought it over and lowered the dagger. "Your dad made this dagger for your mom; I am sorry what happened to her, I am. He made it because he loved herâ€¦and she loved him back. Love is supposed to beâ€¦magic, surreal in the moment but in the end it settles in your gut and you know it is right. Someday you will find that person who makes you feel that wayâ€¦it just isn't me."

Snotlout sniffed and opened his eyes and soon found himself in a hug. "What are you doing?"

"Just go with it," Astrid had heard the footsteps and while she fought the urge to throwup over the strong smell of dragon saliva on him, she also knew who had come in on them.

"Oh, so your lady friend is still here huh?" Snotlout's father went to place his axe up and looked at the two. "It is getting late son."

"What do you mean it's over? How could you break my heart like that?" She took a step back and then slapped him on the cheek.

"Ouchâ€¦I meanâ€¦can't you read my lips? It is over Astrid, you are too clingy and you smell really bad. Female Viking are supposed to be strong and mentally stable, you're just a hopeless romanticâ€¦andâ€¦I can't let that mess with me. Soâ€¦get out of here."

Astrid put on some fake tears and ran out of there. A welcome relief washed over her and she hoped Snotlout would be ok. She had no doubt in her mind he loved her, and probably would never stop, and for that she was actually happy about. It was the one part of him that was sincereâ€¦and the day he stopped loving her she would be a little down at first, but then eventually she would accept it knowing that whoever loved him back was well worth it.

"Hello Astridâ€¦did your date go well?" Gobber was in his shop as he noticed Astrid walking by.

"He broke up with meâ€¦said I was too clingy and smelled." She laughed lightly and spun around.

"Ahhâ€¦so that is a good thing, I think. Anyway where is Hiccup?" He asked putting a weapon away.

"You rememberâ€¦he went off, I saw him leave the island. Wherever he went I hope it was worth itâ€¦" She looked off in the direction he went.

"I'd hope soâ€¦I gave him a map to the Lightning Traverse, had to do with Toothless." He saw her reaction and he heaved a sigh. "You knowâ€¦just forget I said that-."

"Hiccup went to the Lightning Traverseâ€¦without any back up? Tell me he at least brought his spare bag, you know the one with the extra tail and pin for Toothless's tail-."

Gobber looked over at the table with the bag and felt guilt wash over

his features. "I kind ofâ€|urged him to goâ€|before his father found outâ€|"

"I'm going after themâ€|I am not going to lose Hiccup! He may not love meâ€|butâ€|I can live with that!" Grabbing the bag she rushed off to get Stormfly. She just hoped she wasn't too late.

5. Chapter 5 Island of death

CH.5: Island of Death

Hiccup had cried himself to sleep, his body exhausted and hunger was driving him crazy. Everything he saw in his dreams was of food, even Toothless who looked like aâ€|noâ€|must think straight. Hiccup woke with a start and found Toothless with his wing over him. "Thanks budâ€|couldn't sleep either huh?"

Toothless had been restless as he watched the lightning pass through the sky. Something still seemed off to him. Why did the lightning refuse to touch down on the island? This Island was special in some way with its relation to lightning.

"I see the lightning is relentless as ever. I remember when lightning had struck Berk and how Mildew and the villagers thought you were the cause of Thor's wrath. Turns out it was just those dragon posts set up around the island. Thoughâ€|this time it looks like that theory doesn't fit."

Toothless nodded his head. The rain had ceased sometime after Hiccup had gone to sleep and the clouds were finally letting some light in, by that he meant stars. They twinkled above allowing some harmony to show down on themâ€|even with the lightning crackling down with its ferocity.

"Thor must be really angry about somethingâ€|I wonder what it could be." Hiccup got up into a sitting position and played his hand through the dirt.

Toothless began to move towards the water and as he moved his dragon paw out he pulled it back just as the lightning struck. Moving off to the graves he touched themâ€|the lightning seemed rather quiet then.

"Toothlessâ€|what are you doing?" Hiccup stood up and saw the lightning hadn't even touched him or gave his body a good shock. Curious he moved over to Toothless and saw his friend was investigating the lightning.

Toothless attempted to fly, just a bit, however once again the lightning did little to hit him. Moving over to the water he flapped his wings and the lightning struck him sending him into the water.

"Toothless!" Hiccup raced to the water and hearing the thunder knew the lightning would follow. Dragging his friend out of the water, inch by inch, he could feel the hair on the back of his neck stand on end. If he didn't hurryâ€|both of them would be killed.

Toothless regained consciousness and let out a roar as he leaped back

and landed on Hiccup. Apologizing he licked his face and got off him.

"I'm glad you are ok bud. You had me scared there for a second. Mind explaining what is going on?" Hiccup watched his dragon as he tried explaining in his own way. The gist of it was that lightning kept to around the islandâ€|never going anywhere near. It seemed crazy but after what he saw he couldn't argue it.

Toothless walked over to the graves and let out a sorrowful moan. This was the first real sign that there were Nightfury before him, sadly he would never know them or feel them. To be truly the last of his kind, it left a lot to figure out.

"The unholy offspring of lightning and death, I get it now. Don't you see Toothless; the lightning is protecting this island. Your parents died here and the lightning is simply respecting them in its own way. Thorâ€|no wayâ€|this is impossibleâ€|"

Toothless tilted his head to the side watching as Hiccup danced around. He wondered if the lightning had struck him harder than he thought.

Hiccup raced over and placed his hands on Toothless's face. "Thor was the witness; he was here long ago, probably when your parents still lived. He was there when you were bornâ€|and sent you away, probably not wanting you to see them suffer. To keep them safe from dragon hunters he put up this veil of lightning. That would also explain why not much of the island exists now; I mean, anyone coming this way would surely not want to die on an island of this size."

Toothless was excited for knowing this, that the Mighty Thor had actually met his parents. The people of Berk really believed in himâ€|and he seemed like a nice guy from the tales he heard. Still he wished he knew what they had looked like, were they anything like him?

"You knowâ€|I sometimes wonder what my mom would be like if she were still around. Probably still as beautiful as my dad paints her out to be, strong and caring, you'd like her Toothless. She had no judgmental bone in her body; she had an even temper compared to my dad. I miss her."

Toothless licked him and nudged at him with his head. He was not alone anymore, sure knowing his parents had existed; knowing they had once belonged in this world caused him hurt, but he had a new familyâ€|a brother and a father. All of Berk had taken him in, he was the luckiest dragon there ever was.

Hiccup neared the water and as Toothless protested he held up a hand. "Don't worry budâ€|I am not going into the water. Thorâ€|I want to thank you for what you did for Toothless. You set him on the right pathâ€|if it weren't for youâ€|we would've never met and formed a friendship that still holds today, in fact, our friendship drew the people of Berk out of the past. You may stop your lightning thoughâ€|the dragons you protected are no longer alive."

Toothless sat by Hiccup and looked up at the sky. The lightning hadn't ceasedâ€|but some light was shed on the situation. It was then Toothless recognized something flying towards them. He sniffed up at

the sky then his tongue flopped out of his mouth seeing Stormfly.

"What do you see bud?" Hiccup looked up and then recognized Stormfly—and on her back was Astrid? He thought she was at Snotlout's.

"Hiccup!" Astrid eased Stormfly into a descent and that is when lightning struck. Pulling Stormfly back she swooped past the streak of lightning.

"Astrid be careful—the lightning is protecting the island!" Hiccup yelled up at her. He couldn't help feeling helpless as she was in danger and he was down there. Why was she here anyway?

"Great—I'm here saving you and I got lightning to deal with! Hiccup—why can't you make things simple for once." Astrid shook her head and zipped and zagged through the sky as lightning followed her. Grinding her teeth she tried to steady out of the spin she put Stormfly in.

"This is bad—think Hiccup!" He pounded his head and then knew what to do. Looking at Toothless he patted his head as he moved to the water.

"Hiccup—what are you doing? Lightning all around, water bad, pull back!" She yelled at the top of her lungs. The lightning slashed by and cut Stormfly's wing. "Stormfly!"

"Astrid—I love you." Hiccup stepped into the water and that was when the lightning struck in full force. His body was wracked in pain but he wore a smile seeing Astrid have a few moments to avoid getting shocked herself. Losing balance he fell back—right into the open wings of his friend.

"Hiccup!" Astrid pushed Stormfly into a dive; though as they neared the island Stormfly crashed with a thud, her wing slightly tinged from the lightning. Hopping off she rushed over and knelt by him as Toothless lowered him to the ground. "No, no, you can't do this to me Hiccup! I didn't come all this way just to have you save me—I was saving you—I was saving you!"

"Astrid—you did save me!" His voice was cracked, but the same Hiccup like gleam danced in his eyes. His hand reached up and held her cheek. "You brought out the true Viking in me, and—you liked me for all my quirks, believing in me when others didn't. I want to say thank you—you changed me in the end!"

"Hiccup—please don't do this—you aren't going to die! By Thor and all that is mighty to us Vikings I won't let you die." Tears welled up in her eyes and she sniffed. Her hand held his and she could already see the light dieing in his eyes.

"Astrid—sorry I took so long to tell you how I feel. I was preoccupied—but now—now I know where I stand. I will be joining my mom—and don't be in a rush to join me—ugh—find yourself a nice Viking, not saying Snotlout, but someone who will treat you right. Promise me you will look after Toothless—you are the only one I trust to look after him!"

"Hiccupâ€¦don't leave meâ€¦you're my one true loveâ€¦" She wept and tears fell down onto his face. She felt like she was sinking and no matter what she didâ€¦she couldn't push above the water.

"Goodbyeâ€¦Astridâ€¦" He leaned up giving her a kiss. The kiss lasted for a bit before all color drained from him. He went limp and fell back as his head lolled to the side.

Astrid opened her eyes after the kiss and saw Hiccup gone. She let out a blood curdling cry to the heavens above, Thor, anyone that would listen. "Thorâ€¦pleaseâ€¦you can't let him die! Someone, anyone, help me!"

Toothless nudged his friend, his big eyes staring at his friend. He wasn't gone, no, he wouldn't accept that. He bit down on his arm and waited for a reactionâ€¦but nothing came. His eyes welled up and looking over at the graves then down at his fallen rider he howled in pain. The lightning above still raged on and as the two cried it seemed clear this was the end of Hiccup's journey.

****Authors note: ****This island has now taken another life, however, a mysterious figure is set to appear to set Hiccup back on his path. Who is this mysterious figure whose path will clash with Hiccup? Is death really the endâ€¦or just the beginning? Not many Vikings have lived through being struck by lightningâ€¦will Hiccup be the first? See you in the next chapter.

6. Chapter 6 Hiccup's spirit walk

CH.6: Hiccup's spirit walk

It was late into the night when Astrid and Toothless had fallen asleep. Hiccup lay there unmovingâ€¦his cold body lying out in the open. A cold wind blew over the island and a mysterious figure crept off a dragon. They were quite stealthy, no amount of weight was applied to the ground to unsettle any rocks or stir up vibrations to awake the girl and dragon. Reaching the boy the figure placed a hand over his head then reached into their pack.

Pulling out a herb the person began applying it all over him and allowing some to slip down his throat. Sitting down cross legged the figure took a breath and let it out. The dragon made its way over and let out a breath enveloping them.

* * *

><p>Hiccup sat bolt upright then, his eyes looking over the island. "What just happened?" Hiccup felt his body and it felt warm to his touch.<p>

"Welcome back Dragon Rider. I have been waiting for you." The figure said in a deep voice, their face hidden in a dark hood drawn up.

"Are youâ€¦my mother?" He asked. He had to know, a part of him knew that if this was death it had to be her.

"Hiccupâ€¦do you want me to be your mother? I can take many forms, if

you like your mother's form shouldn't be too hard to-."

"No, I change my mind." Hiccup rubbed his head as he paced about. "So if you are not my mother, who are you?"

"I am your spiritual guide, the person who will set you on your pathâ€|depending on what you choose. Consider this the space between deathâ€|where your soul lies in a turmoil, only you can decide how your story ends."

"That is deepâ€|and creepy. Okâ€|calm down Hiccupâ€|this is all just a bad dream." He rubbed his eyes trying to will himself awake, though as he tripped he noticed his body.

"Yes Hiccupâ€|that is your body. Right now to your friends you remain cold to the touchâ€|and they presume you are dead."

"I am deadâ€|there is no life in me at all. How can I return to them after leaving them? Wouldn't that cause them unrest, oh Odin, I can't do that."

"I am not Odin, I have many names but most you could not pronounce. Look at the ones you'd leave behind if you chose to prematurely leave." The figure gestured then and Hiccup found himself beside a shivering Astrid.

"Toothlessâ€|I turned Snotlout down. I won't lie, a part of me was tempted to be his girlfriend, but, I don't knowâ€|I guess a part of me didn't want to give up on Hiccup. The guy is so clueless when it comes to a girl showing him affection, still, he has heart. He is different from most Vikings, and if he were alive, I'd be the best girlfriend there ever was." She held herself and Toothless sat by her and started a fire to keep her warm.

"Wowâ€|she turned down Snotlout. I worried so much about my regrets and course of actions, and yet, all along she has been thereâ€|how could I have doubted her?"

"Young loveâ€|any parent would say it is just a phase, that you will grow out of it and bunker down and somewhere down the line find your soul mate, your true love. You are a Viking, when it comes to love it isn't really something you become good at it, if it were taught perhaps, but most of it is through self-discovery and stumbling along, much like you haveâ€|I imagine."

"Ah yeahâ€|that was how it was for me and Astrid, not that we're a coupleâ€|we've only shared a few kisses, nothing too meaningful. I hate what this is doing to herâ€|stillâ€|maybe it is better I am deadâ€|this way she can meet someone who will not be slow on reaction."

The figure shook their head then pointed at the dragon. "Toothless, why did you call him that?"

"Wellâ€|it kind of stuck after first seeing him up close and noticing his gums and no teeth. Of course he did have teeth when he chomped down on the fish. Toothless had sort of innocence to it, a quality that gave it something different from something a Viking would give him."

"You felt a connection to him, an inseparable bond that united the two of you. How can you abandon him now? Astrid has Stormfly, won't you think this will conflict her leaving one dragon out?" The figure tilted their head in question.

"I-I never thought of it like that, I just thoughtâ€¦I mean Astrid is a great girl, an amazing rider, she has the aptitude to do the right thing. I mean she saw right through Heather's clever guise while I was wrapped up in her looks, well aside from Snotlout and the other guys." Hiccup sighed and watched as the figure showed him Toothless.

Toothless walked over to Hiccup's body and began to form a circle of heat that surrounded him. Sitting down on his haunches he looked over him and didn't move from that position.

"A dragon only has one rider Hiccup, the one that counts. Toothless will allow most anyone to ride him, take to the sky with him, but where does he sleep at night? Who feeds him and comforts him when he needs it the most?" The figure walked over to the graves and placed a hand on them.

"Wowâ€¦you're really making me come off as selfish aren't you?' He shook his head then turned to see what the figure was doing.
"Umâ€¦what are you doing?"

"I am paying my respects to the fallen. These were kind and gentle creatures, not the menace the Vikings have made them out to be. This island once thrived with Nightfury, more than these two in fact. They were playful and competitiveâ€¦you should have seen them race each other. At night they were majestic in the moonlight."

"You kind of sound like you were there," Hiccup noted as he joined the figure. The way the person touched the graves, it was intimate, like how he would hold out his hand when introducing a dragon to himself. Looking closely he could almost picture the Nightfury lean forward.

"In a matter of speakingâ€¦I was. To be truthful these two were not the last, there were in fact four Nightfury who lived here at the time. Sadly hunters came andâ€¦I do not wish to relive it. The lightning came around then, a fury of anger from Thor himself. You would think Thor was unmerciful to dragons, that he had no like for their breed, don't believe all your told."

Hiccup looked at the person curiously, finding a sense of grief and wonderment in their tale. Who was this person? Their voice sounded like honey and they spoke with such understanding of dragons, like him. It wasn't often he met someone like thisâ€¦howeverâ€¦they were likely just as dead as he was, or way more dead seeing how they wore a robe.

"You must return to the land of living Hiccup. There is still much for you to do, to see. It is important that you keep close to those you loveâ€¦for I fear things are going to take a turn for the worse. There are enemies far worse than Alvin the Treacherous out there, one who won't stop until all you love are gone. In timeâ€¦we may meet again."

"Waitâ€¦who are you? Spiritual guideâ€¦I need to knowâ€¦did you know

my mother?" He could feel a fuzziness taking over his entire being, his body was going numb.

"Your motherâ€|she was a kind soul. If I had seen herâ€|she would probably be here instead of me talking to you." She began moving off and on her lips was a sad smile. "Do not act rash with your fate Hiccup, treat your life wellâ€|for you only have one life to live."

Hiccup reached for the hood of the person but it was only then the white overtook him and he was sent back.

* * *

><p>The figure ran a hand over Hiccup's face and moved his hair out of his face. His hair was growing longer and he would probably need a haircut soon. The way she moved her hands over his faceâ€|a familiarity seemed to show there. Looking over she noticed the Nightfury stir and as he saw her he showed his teeth.<p>

"I am not your enemyâ€|Toothless. I want you to take care of him, don't let him pull something stupid like that again, he is too precious to me to see lost to this world, this land he helped make for the better." She held out her hand and watched as Toothless pressed his nose against it.

Toothless pondered on who this person was and what she had done to his friend. How long had she hovered over Hiccup?

Letting her hood drop down she had dark long hair and her face looked maternal, her eyes caring as she cast a look over her shoulder. She had no fear of Toothless recognizing her, seeing how she had had seen him ages ago. "Take care of my son Toothlessâ€|until we meet again." She climbed onto her dragon and as its mighty wings beat upon the ground she sailed off.

The lightning had stopped at her departure and Toothless looked after her in confusion. Hearing something soft but not to be mistaken with an animal waking up he looked down to see eyes stretching open and a human chest pumping.

"What just happened?" Hiccup was back.

****Authors note: ****Hiccup is now back in the land of living and whether he takes the spiritual guide's words to heart or a mere facade of words in his dream, remains to be seen. Not sure anyone saw this coming, but his mother's role in all this and piecing things together, I figured it would settle nicely in Hiccup's return. Bringing the dead back to life, especially in the world of dragons and Vikings, not the easiest thing to do. See you in the next chapter.

7. Chapter 7 Clear skies ahead

CH.7: Clear skies ahead

Hiccup had just woken up and then he felt Toothless's tongue on him. "Hey bud, ease up on the tongue there. Tongueâ€|I can feel itâ€|I'm alive!" He got up and managed to support himself on Toothless. He had

forgotten he had been struck by lightning early and his arm had been messed upâ€|but it seemed fine now.

"Hiccup shut your yapâ€|I'm trying toâ€|" Astrid sat bolt upright and looking over spotted Hiccup standingâ€|and alive. "Oh Odin beâ€|if you are playing a prank on meâ€|I swear I will kill you again."

"Astrid relaxâ€|it is me. I had the strangest dream; both you and Toothless were in it. My spiritual guide allowed me to hear your words, see your actions, it was like I was thereâ€|but I wasn't." He laughed lightly finding most of it still fuzzy.

"Stop messing around Hiccupâ€|spiritual guide really? And, um, how much did you hear?" Astrid grew quiet as she played with her hair. A slight blush played over her features and she felt the need to hit someone.

"Wellâ€|not sure how much of it is reliableâ€|butâ€|how did your date go with Snotlout?" Hiccup drew nearer to her and saw her blush intensify.

"Wellâ€|let us just say there won't be a second date anytime soon," she looked at him through her lids and saw him playing coy. "You heard me talk about itâ€|didn't you?"

"Again Astrid, not sure how much could be relied on, remember spirit guide. All I know isâ€|I'm happy, yeah it comes off as mean, maybe callous, but I've loved you for so long Astrid. All I could do was stare at you from a distanceâ€|but nowâ€|there is no more distance between us."

Astrid raised a brow. "Reallyâ€|wellâ€|I'm still not sure about you Hiccup, what is to stop you from going to save the dragons again or run off on our date to fix a problem?"

Hiccup grinned and punched her in the arm. He read the alarm in her face and knew he had to follow it up with something. A kiss was her thing, no, he had to do it his own way. Reaching for her he dipped her to the ground and kissed her deeply. The kiss was meaningful and unlike the one he used on his dieing breath, this one hopefully went the distance.

Astrid felt her breath caught as Hiccup did the unthinkable. Luckily he didn't punch too hard; still, she stopped thinking about that when he dipped her. Holding onto him she sank into his bodyâ€|defying gravity for a bit as the kiss lasted longer than any of hers. When the kiss had ended he picked her back up and she madly blushed. "Wow Hiccupâ€|way to take point."

"Thanksâ€|I think. So Astrid, would you consider possibly being myâ€|girlfriend?" He asked still holding onto her.

"I don't know, what about Snotlout? We did share something in his house, this could really hurt him." She was half kidding and half not. She and Snotlout did share something in his house, and while she had helped him breaking it off with her to show his father he was a Viking; well, she didn't want to hurt him anymore then she already had.

"I am sure Snotlout will understandâ€¦plusâ€¦he is a Viking, emotional crisis isn't really our thing." It was a good thing he didn't mention crying to her, then he would never live it down.

"I can agree to that. Soâ€¦how we getting back to Berk? Stormfly is hurt and Toothless can't fly, unless we send a messageâ€¦wellâ€¦we're stuck." She pulled out of their embrace and walked over to Stormfly.

"Waitâ€¦you brought Toothless's bag, I can fix him up a new tail. Hold on." Getting the tail and pin he began to work on his tail, hard at work he felt motivated. When done he stood up and presented the finished product.

"Wowâ€¦impressive, think Toothless can pick up Stormfly now?" Astrid asked. She would not leave Stormfly here, she was her dragon.

"Toothless may not be as big as Hookfang, but, he can certainly carry Stormfly." Climbing onto Toothless he held his hand down to her. Once Astrid was behind him he adjusted the tail flap and flying over he gave Toothless the instruction to pick up Stormfly.

Toothless reassured Stormfly with a few roars and clamped down a hold onto her. Flapping hard it was a struggle and once in flight they were about mid height. The flight was long and he worked out his wings getting used to flying again.

"I hope you found what you were looking for Hiccupâ€¦cause I'm not losing you again. We're more than a team nowâ€¦we're a couple." Astrid hugged his back and wore a soft smile on her face.

Hiccup blushed and nodded his head. The island of death as he now called it held many trials for him, and what he took away was to not take his life for granted. There were those who depended on him, needed him in order to carry on. Astrid was his girlfriend now and he needed to be there for her, for better or worse, they were a team. It had been reckless of him pursuing the Lightning Traverse without any back up, including the other riders. The wind in his face was gentler on the return trip and a smile was on his face.

Toothless, how could he be so selfish as to think someone else could be his rider? Why would he place Astrid in such a tight bind, pitting her loyalty of Stormfly also with his dragon? A bond between dragon and rider was preciousâ€¦never to be taken for granted. Looking down at Toothless he saw how peaceful he was, how content and happy he was to have him back.

Far as the spiritual guide wentâ€¦it was crazy really. Stillâ€¦how was he alive now? He surely should've been a dead corpse, yet here he was living and breathing. This person brought him back, made him see his purpose in life. And what was with this warning? It didn't sit well with Hiccup and to think that someone more powerful than Alvin lurked out there just made him realize the necessity to train harder, to defend Berk with all of his and the rest of the riders might. The sun was rising and knew many challenges lay ahead, none simple or easy, nonetheless it was a road he had chosen the day he trained Toothlessâ€¦and how they had become best friends.

"I can safely say the Lightning Traverse won't be a problem

anymoreâ€|who knowsâ€|maybe someday-."

"I think this chapter in your life is over Hiccupâ€|lets focus on home for now." Astrid tightened her grip around his waist.

"I was just kiddingâ€|Astridâ€|still flying hereâ€|" Hiccup let out a breath as she eased up on her grip and he laughed. Leaning back he looked into her eyes and gave her a kiss. Flying into Berk never seemed so easy, so peaceful, it was good being home.

THE END

****Authors note: ****So, how did you like it? I tried to bring the ending of the story to a fitting conclusion instead of dragging it out. I could've done some tension between Snotlout and Hiccup over Astrid or possibly go further into the spiritual guide, but, I also realize I still have so many more tales to tell in the Dragons series. As soon as this story concludes another shall begin, hope to see ya there, till then thanks to all those who have read and reviewed making this story a fun accomplishment. I do love this series and see ya.

End
file.